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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Imagery Analysis Report

Standard Gauge Rail Line Construction in China

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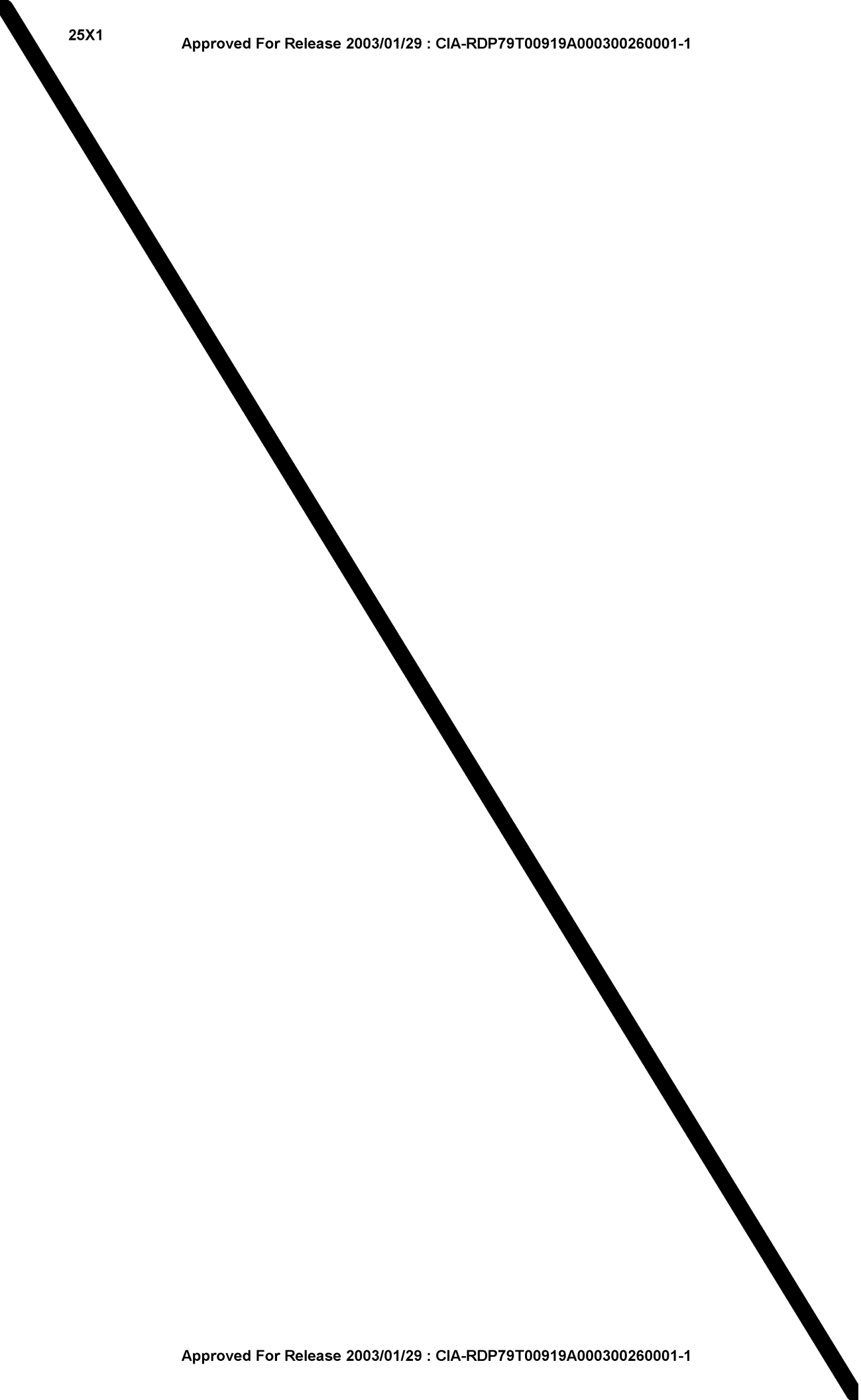

March 1969

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
Imagery Analysis Service

STANDARD GAUGE RAIL LINE CONSTRUCTION IN CHINA [redacted] 25X1

SUMMARY

25X1 The Chinese continued work [redacted] on four of the five standard gauge rail line construction projects known to be active at the beginning of the year. The fifth rail line construction project was abandoned early in the year. No new standard gauge major rail line construction projects are believed to have been started.

The most intensive construction activity occurred along the 560 nautical mile (nm) Cheng-tu to Kun-ming Rail Line in Szechwan and Yunnan Provinces. Rapid progress was made on roadbed, bridge, and tunnel construction.

In northeast Yunnan Province, three additional nm of roadbed was completed on a rail line extending south from I-pin by the end of the year. This construction may be part of the northern segment of the proposed 200 nm Nei-chiang to Kun-ming Rail Line.

Major bridge construction continued at the Yangtze and Han River crossings along the probable alignment of a major north-south rail line.

After being suspended for much of the year, construction was resumed in the closing months on a major forestry rail line in northern Heilungkiang Province.

25X1 Construction on the 250 nm Peking to Yuan-ping Rail Line was halted early [redacted] Highway construction was subsequently observed along a portion of the rail line's probable alignment.

NOTE: This report was prepared in direct support of the Central Intelligence Agency.

CONTENTS

Illustrations

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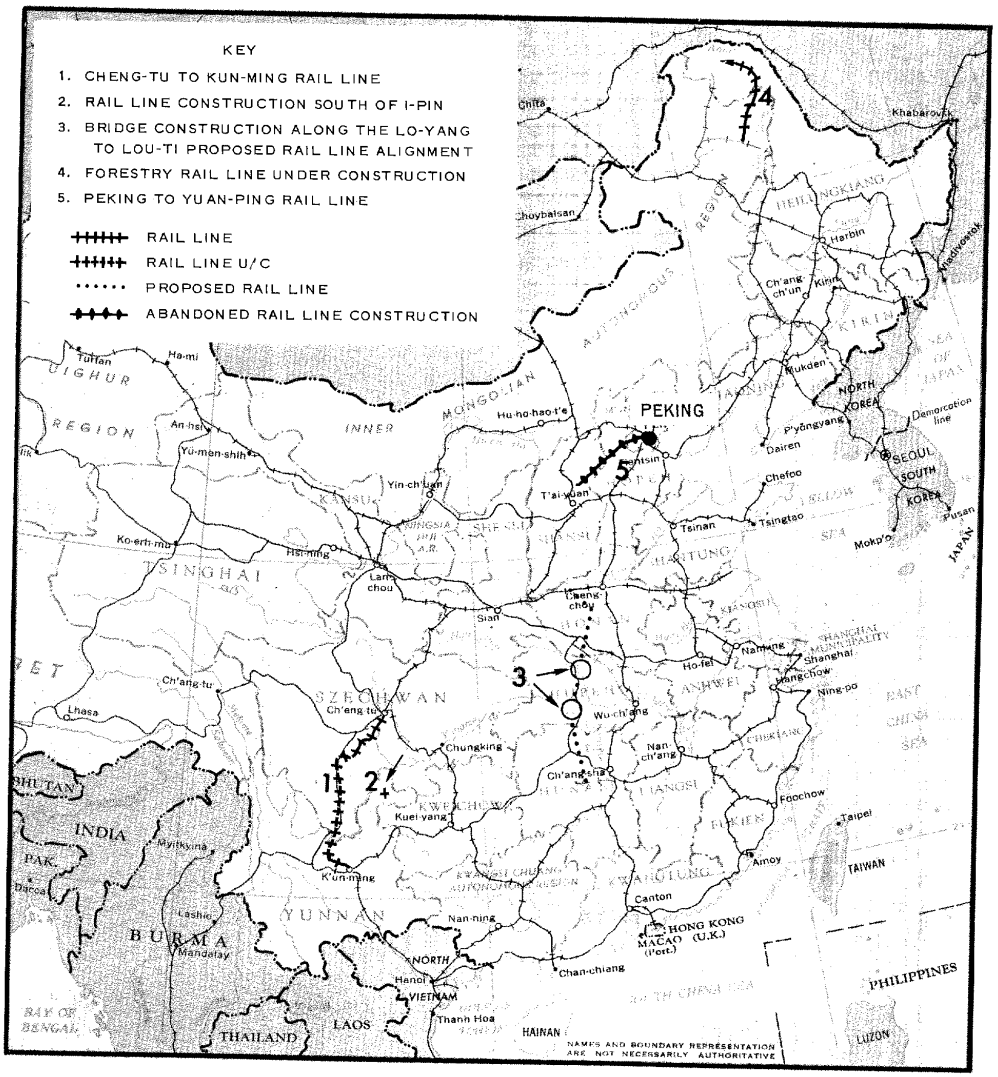

FIGURE 1. LOCATION OF CHINESE STANDARD GAUGE RAIL LINE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to describe the progress of all major standard gauge rail line construction projects observed in China [redacted] Abandoned or inactive standard gauge rail line projects are not discussed. Also not included are the existing, serviceable standard gauge rail lines and their associated spurs and facilities. The findings of the report are based on [redacted] photographic coverage of at least 75 percent of China's major standard gauge rail network.

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CHENG-TU TO KUN-MING RAIL LINE, SZECHWAN AND YUNNAN PROVINCES

The Cheng-tu to Kun-ming Rail Line remains the largest rail construction project in southwest China (Figure 2). With the addition of 30 nm of track [redacted] the serviceable segments of the rail line now total 277 nm or approximately 50 percent of the length of the route. The serviceable segments of the rail line are located at each end: a 155 nm segment runs south from Cheng-tu and a 92 nm segment runs north from Kun-ming. Rail traffic has been observed on these sections of track.

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Although initial construction in the early 1960s was at a slow pace, rapid progress has been noted [redacted] The following are descriptions of construction activity along the entire route [redacted]

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Segment A (155 nm). Serviceable with traffic observed.

Segment B (84 nm). Roadbed is under intermittent construction; at least half of the bridge piers have been completed and most of the tunnels are under construction or complete. The largest tunnel along the route, about 3 nm long, is under construction at 28-16N 102-3[illegible]E.

Segment C (17 nm). Roadbed is almost complete on this relatively level segment. Bridge piers and tunnels are completed.

Segment D (40 nm). Roadbed is under intermittent construction; less than half of the bridge piers have been completed and all of the tunnels are under construction.

Segment E (37 nm). Roadbed and bridges are nearly completed; tunnels are probably completed.

Segment F (36 nm). Roadbed is under intermittent construction; less than one-third of the bridge piers are completed and all tunnels are under construction.

Segment G (85 nm). Roadbed is under continuous construction; at least two-thirds of the bridge piers and all of the tunnels appear completed.

Segment H (10 nm). Roadbed is nearly completed; bridge piers and tunnels are finished.

Segment I (92 nm). Serviceable with traffic observed.

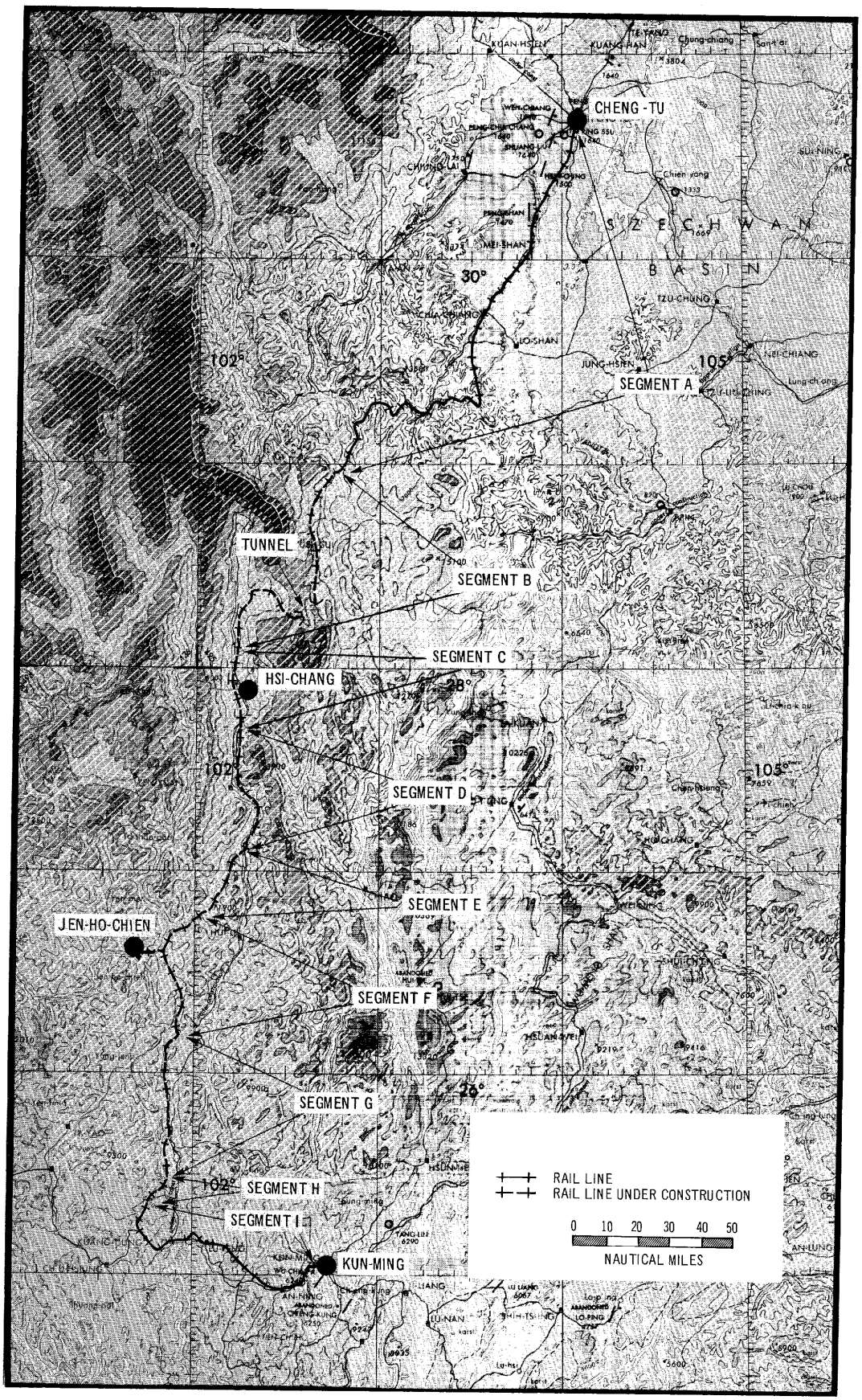

FIGURE 2. CONSTRUCTION STATUS OF THE CHENG-TU TO KUN-MING RAIL LINE, [redacted]

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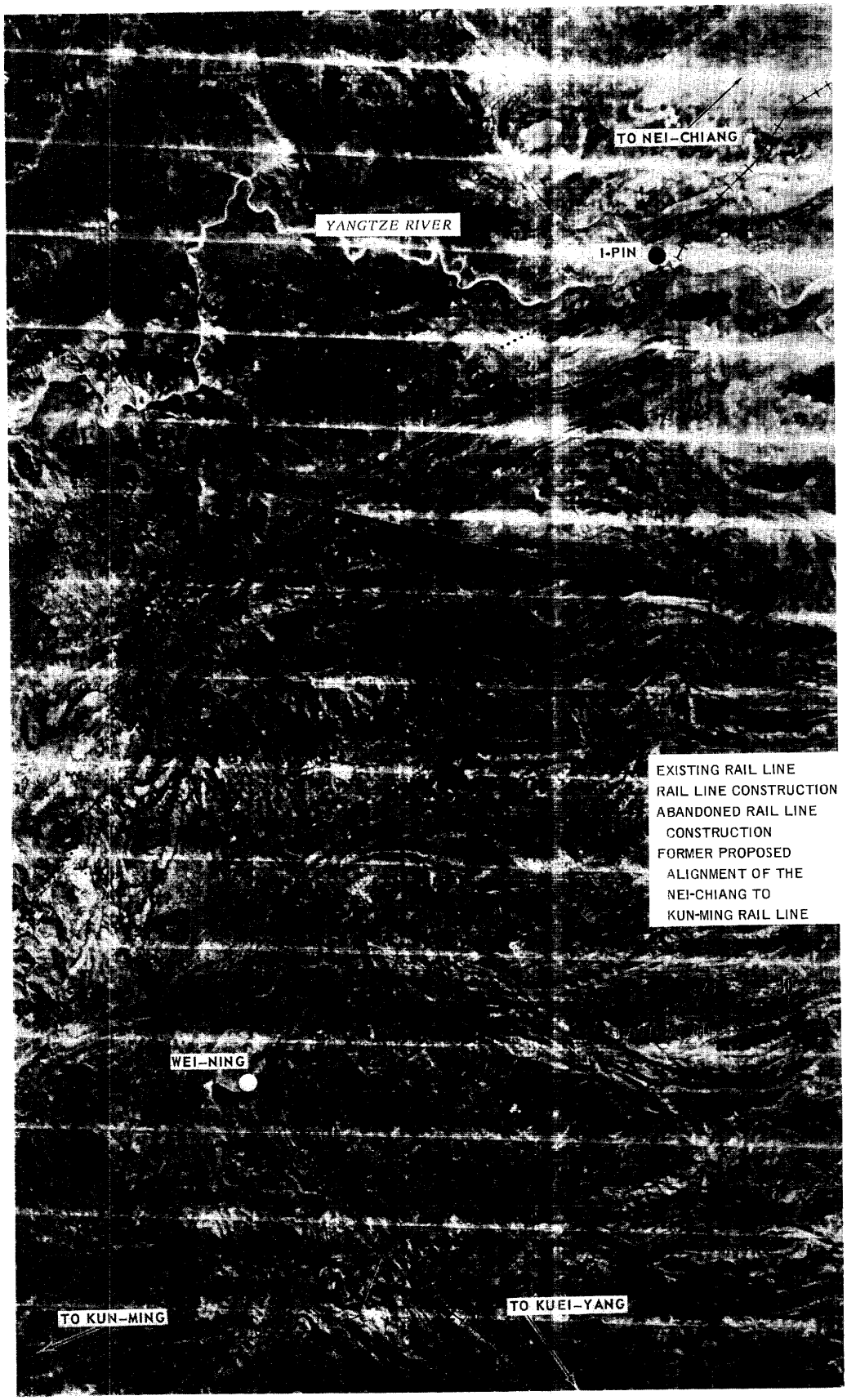

FIGURE 3. RAIL LINE CONSTRUCTION SOUTH OF I-PIN,

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RAIL LINE CONSTRUCTION SOUTH OF I-PIN, YUNNAN PROVINCE

Construction on a two-year-old roadbed extending southward from I-pin to 28-24N 104-42E continued slowly [redacted] (Figure 3). Three additional nm of roadbed was under construction and an approximately 1,000 foot bridge across the Yangtze River was completed immediately south of I-pin. Most of the bridge piers along the 26 nm route are in place. No track has been laid.

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An analysis of the surrounding terrain reveals that this route may ultimately be used as either the northern segment of the proposed 200 nm Nei-chiang to Kun-ming Rail Line or as a local mining rail line. The northern and southern segments of the Nei-chiang to Kun-ming Rail Line were first observed nearly eight years ago. The roadbed was subsequently abandoned and work has not resumed on this alignment. [redacted] photography of the present railhead does not reveal surveying or mineral prospecting activity.

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PROBABLE MAJOR RAIL LINE CONSTRUCTION, HUPEH PROVINCE

The location of major bridge construction across the Han and Yangtze Rivers indicates the Chinese are probably carrying out plans for a major north-south rail line in the area. The bridge across the Han River is located at 32-13N 111-41E, 35 nm southeast of Kuang-hua. Although construction started in late [redacted] it appears still to be in early stages. [redacted] nine center piers were completed, roadbed grading and approach pier construction were begun on the east side of the river, and a one nm rail spur was being built from the Hankow to Kuang-hua Rail Line to the eastern bridge approach. When completed, the bridge structure will be about 5,000 feet long.

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The bridge across the Yangtze River is located east of I-tu at 30-17N 111-13E. The structure has been under construction [redacted] and will be approximately 5,000 feet long when complete. Six center piers and several approach piers were completed [redacted]

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Two alignments for a major north-south rail line in this area have been proposed by the Chinese in the past and both are compatible with the location of the bridge sites (Figure 4). The first alignment extends 600 nm south from Lo-yang to Lou-ti; the proposed rail line would create an additional north-south route of major importance through central China. The second alignment extends from Ping-ting-shan (33-44N 113-18E) to I-tu. The purpose of this rail line would be to bring coal from the Ping-ting-shan area to the reportedly iron-rich I-tu area for future steel production.

FORESTRY RAIL LINE, NORTHERN HEILUNGKIANG PROVINCE

25X1 [redacted] 83 nm of track was laid and an additional 57 nm of roadbed was partially prepared on the rail line beyond Ku-chi-ku (50-24N 124-07E) to 52-41N 123-36E. [redacted] construction on this line had abruptly stopped and five work camps had been partially razed. This was highly unusual because rail construction is usually programmed for the summer months

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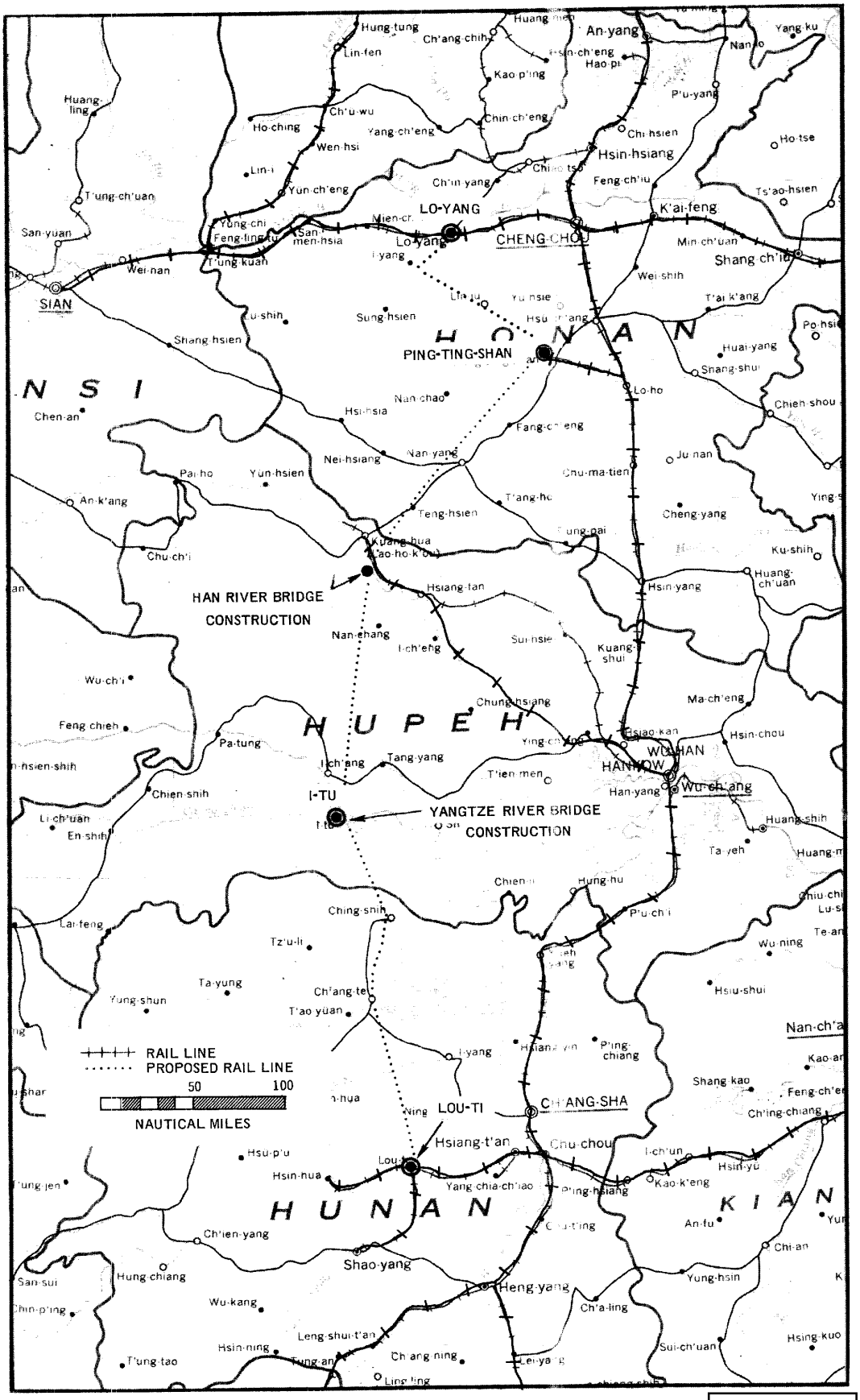

FIGURE 4. LOCATION OF BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION OVER THE HAN AND YANGTZE RIVERS, 25X1

in the northeastern part of China. In [redacted] however, photography revealed that several of the work camps had been rebuilt and that track had been laid on the 57 nm segment of roadbed (Figure 5). 25X1

Several rail lines have been built in the timber-rich northern portion of Heilungkiang Province during the past five years. Timber resource development within this region involves the construction of a standard gauge main line to carry the raw materials to the mills in the south, and narrow gauge branch lines extending from the rail-to-rail transloading yards on the standard gauge line to nearby wooded slopes and valleys.

PEKING TO YUAN-PING RAIL LINE, SHANSI AND HOPEH PROVINCES

25X1 Construction of a 57 nm segment of roadbed west of Peking was abandoned in [redacted] A 200 nm road being built from the western limit of roadbed construction at 39-41N 115-27E apparently follows the intended alignment to Yuan-ping (Figure 6).

The abandoned roadbed started at the Peking to Erh-lien Rail Line, 9 nm west of Peking, and extended westward into the rugged Tai-hang Shan (Mountains). Although numerous bridge piers were constructed, no bridges were completed, and tunnel construction was apparently halted before completion.

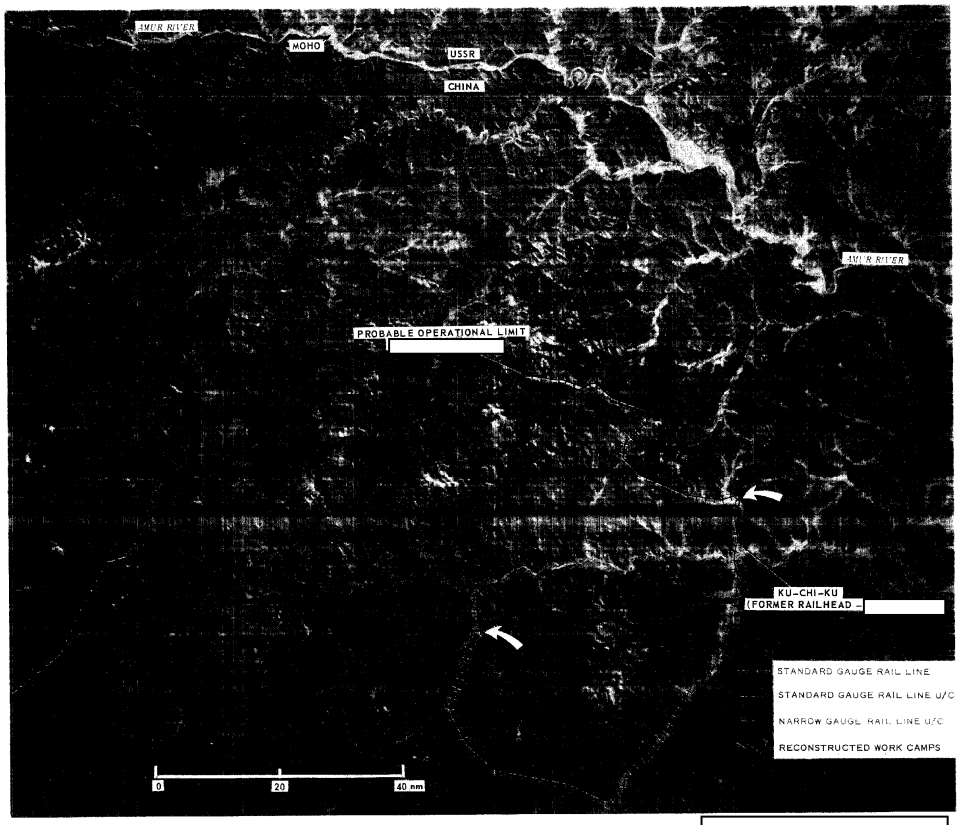

FIGURE 5. CONSTRUCTION STATUS OF FORESTRY RAIL LINE, HEILUNGKIANG PROVINCE,

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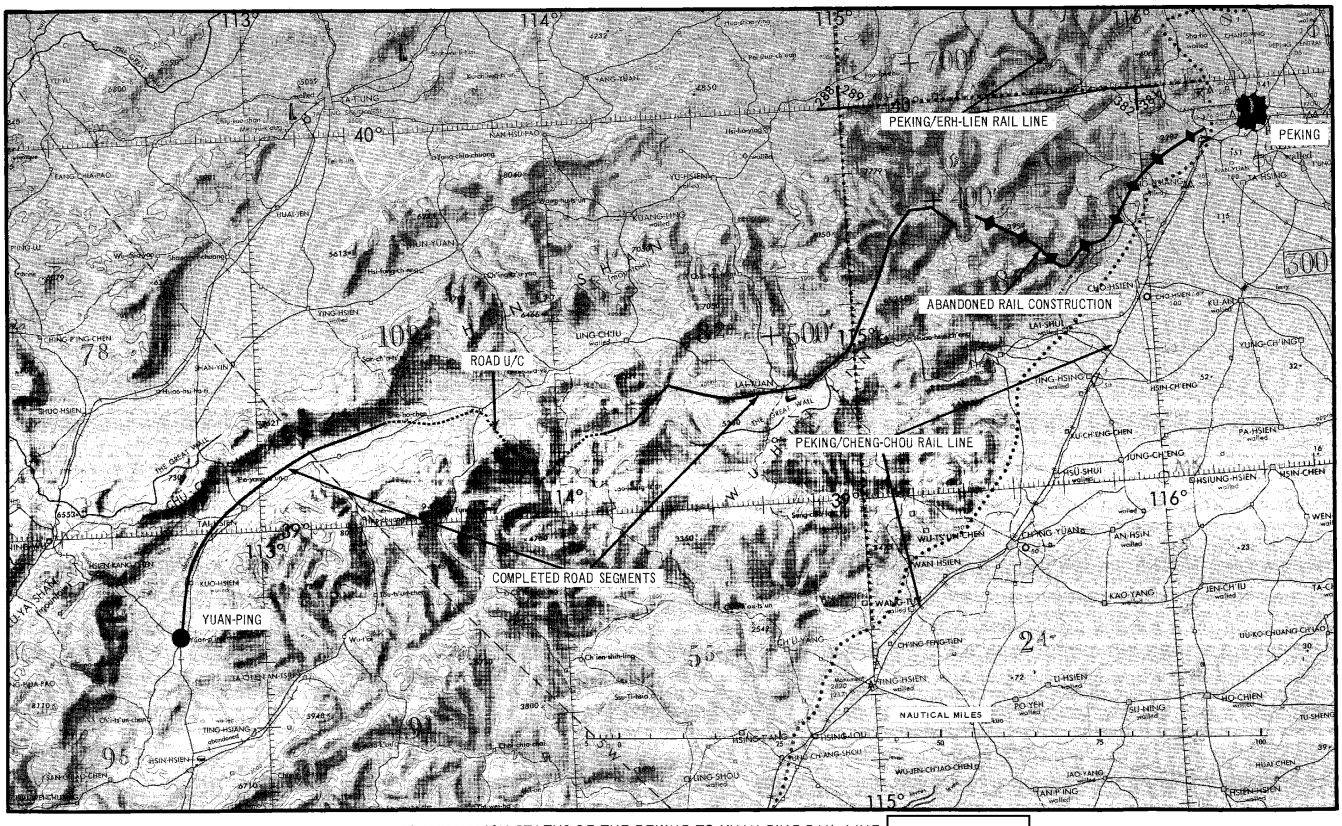

FIGURE 6. CONSTRUCTION STATUS OF THE PEKING TO YUAN-PING RAIL LINE.

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- 11 -

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[redacted]

MAPS AND CHARTS

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